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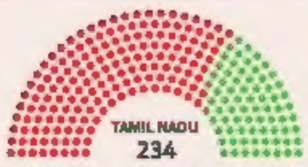
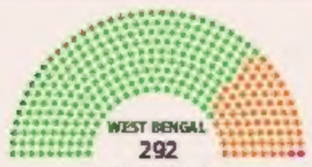
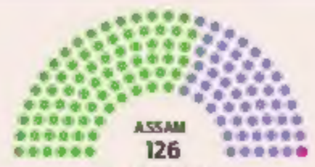
■ KOZHIKODE ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
■ BELAGAVI ■ BHUBANESWAR ■ SHIVAMOGGA
■ MANGALURU ■ TIRUPATI ■ TIRUCHY
■ TIRUNELVELI ■ SAMBALPUR ■ HUBBALLI
■ DHARMAPURI ■ KOTTAYAM ■ KANNUR
■ VILLUPURAM ■ KOLLAM ■ WARANGAL
■ TADEPALLIGUDEM ■ NAGAPATTINAM
■ THRISSUR ■ KALABURAGI







Top section shows the number of seats in which a party or alliance is leading or has been declared the winner by the EC. The bottom part indicates share of votes won and the swing in brackets. Figures valid as of 11:30 pm

ZERO

IS THE SCORE CARD OF THE ONCE MIGHTY CPI(M)-LED LEFT FRONT IN BENGAL. ITS ALLIANCE PARTNER, THE CONGRESS, TOO GOT ZILCH. IN PUDUCHERRY, THE AIADMK LOST ALL THE FIVE SEATS IT CONTESTED IN

SAFFRON CURVE FLATTENED

AFTER A DECADE IN WAITING, SON RISES ON THE DMK HORIZON

S KUMARESAN @ Chennai

IT was a well-fought battle, defying predictions of a "clean sweep" and springing quite a few surprises in the process. Out of power for a decade, the DMK finally managed to dethrone its Dravidian rival by a comfortable margin. MK Stalin, who has been waiting in the sidelines for the last several years, is all set to swear-in as the eighth Chief Minister of the State. At 68, he would be the oldest first-time Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. This is the first time in 25 years that the DMK has secured a majority on its own.

For AIADMK, the defeat was not as bad as predicted. It would be the strongest AIADMK Opposition in the history of State Assembly, which indicates that the anti-incumbency factor was not as close as it was predicted. The biggest takeaway, however is this: Tamil Nadu has, once again, decisively, shut the doors on the so-called "Third Front." Self-proclaimed centrist Kamal Haasan's party, MNM, scored a duck, with even the actor himself losing the race. Instead, Seeman's Naam Tamizhar Katchi emerged as the underdog, in the third place.

BJP put up a poor show compared to its national rival Congress. However, the saffron party did manage to get MLAs elected into the State Assembly after decades. The Congress, meanwhile, put up an impressive show, winning 16 out of the 25 seats in which it contested. "This is a vote for change," says veteran journalist G Kubendran. "Caste politics has been voted out, as sitting ministers including MC Sampath, CVe Shanmugam and KC Veeramani have lost despite the last-minute internal quota given to Vanniyars."

Edappadi K Palaniswami, however, managed to retain his Kongu belt forte. The same pro-AIADMK sentiment did not resonate in Southern districts, considered to be a bastion of O Panneerselvam. The capital city and its surrounding districts gave a resounding mandate to DMK, with the party winning almost all seats here. "The election victory is the result of hardwork put in by Stalin," said another scribe, T Koodalarasan. This election will go down in history for one more reason, for the thumping victory of Udhayanidhi Stalin, the heir-apparent of the DMK. The winning mojo rubbed off on Kanniyakumari Lok Sabha bypoll too, with Congress candidate Vijay Vasanth leading the race.

FULL COVERAGE: P7

DMK president MK Stalin pays respects at Karunanidhi memorial at Marina in Chennai on Sunday night after his election victory | ASHWIN PRASATH

NDA SCRIPTING HISTORY IN PUDUCHERRY

Puducherry: The National Democratic Alliance (NDA), for the first time in history, is set to form the government in Puducherry, a Congress bastion. The alliance, led by All India NR Congress (AINRC), is projected to win more than 15 seats in the 30-member Assembly. While the AINRC won 10 seats, the BJP has won three and is leading in three seats. It is to be noted that most of the BJP candidates who won were Congress turncoats | P7

QUICK BYTES

Congratulations to Mamata Didi... The Centre will continue to extend all possible support to the West Bengal Government to fulfil people's aspirations and also to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic
Narendra Modi, PM

I will be truthful to you, I will work for you, my thoughts and deeds would be for the people of this state
M K Stalin, DMK chief

We humbly accept the people's mandate. Sincere gratitude to our workers & the millions of people who supported us on the ground. We will continue to fight for our values and ideals
Rahul Gandhi, Cong leader

SONOWAL WINS FROM MAJULI

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal retained his Majuli seat, defeating Rajib Lochan Pegu (Cong) by 43,192 votes. Sonowal polled 71,436 votes (67.53%), while the Cong secured 28,244 votes (26.7%)

SONIA DIALS MAMATA, STALIN

Seeking to build Opposition momentum, Congress president Sonia Gandhi called Trinamool chief Mamata Banerjee and DMK head M K Stalin to congratulate them for their stupendous victories

Respect the verdict of people of Nandigram, but we have got a landslide victory... Bengal has saved India today
– Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal Chief Minister

Mamata tsunami in Bengal; BJP manages to hold Assam

H KHOGEN SINGH, PRANAB MONDAL & PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ New Delhi/Kolkata/Guwahati

SOON after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee injured her left foot in Nandigram, allegedly at the hands of the Bharatiya Janata Party, she often referred to herself as a wounded Bengal tiger.

Ranged against her was the combined might of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union home minister Amit Shah, BJP chief J P Nadda and the seemingly unstoppable BJP election juggernaut. But in the end, it was the saffron party that was left to licks its wounds as Mamata won the election *khela* of the decade at a canter. At the time of going to the press the Trinamool Congress had won or was leading in 215 of the 294 Assembly seats in the state. The BJP, its principal rival, was way behind at 75 seats and far short from its projected 200.

The election results were also a reversal of the 2019 Lok Sabha election results: when translated into Assembly seats, the BJP was ahead in 121. The 2019 results had upped the BJP's tail and it had hoped to build on it to mount a challenge, after it made deep inroads into the Dalit-dominated Junglemahal and north Bengal.

In Junglemahal, the BJP led in 21 of the 27 seats in 2019, in north Bengal the saffron party led in 35 of the 54 seats. But this time the results got reversed. The Trinamool won 20 seats in Junglemahal and 27 in north Bengal.

TMC activists celebrate the party's win in South Dinajpur district on Sunday | PTI

A prominent feature of the West Bengal elections was that it became a two-horse race between the Trinamool and the BJP, reducing the Left Front and the Congress as mere also-rans.

The Left, which ruled the state for 34 years before Mamata's advent, and the Congress failed even to open their accounts.

Their candidates fell like nine pins even in their strongholds of Murshidabad, Malda, North Dinajpur and South Dinajpur comprising 49 seats. The Trinamool secured leads in 38 seats mainly because of consolidation of the minority voters, which are deciding factors in the region.

The traditional minority vote bank of the Congress and the Left in the four districts shifted its loyalty to the ruling party because of the BJP's Hindutva rhetoric.

CONTINUED ON: P10

Nandigram swung like a pendulum

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kolkata

NANDIGRAM, the epicentre of the high-octane West Bengal Assembly elections in East Midnapore, witnessed a nail-biting drama on who would be the winner—Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee or her once trusted lieutenant-turned-foe Suvendu Adhikari.

The drama continued till the last round when news of Mamata's victory came in, but minutes later, Suvendu's victory by 1,956 votes was announced. While the returning officer rejected Trinamool's request for a recount, the party asked the chief election officer to reconsider it.

CONTINUED ON: P10

WINNERS

UDHAYANIDHI STALIN
93,285
Beat Kassali A V A of PMK by 69,355 votes from Chepauk (TN)

K K SHAILAJA
96,129
beat Illikkal Augusthy of RSP by 60,963 votes from Mattannur (Kerala)

HIMANTA SARMA
1,30,232
beat Romen Borthakur of Congress by 1,01,911 votes from Jalukbari (Assam)

LOSERS

KAMAL HAASAN
51,481
lost to BJP's Vanathi Srinivasan by 1,728 votes from CBE South (TN)

E SREEDHARAN
50,220
lost to Congress' Shafi Parambil 3,859 votes from Palakkad (Kerala)

SWAPAN DASGUPTA
89,214
lost to TMC's Ramendu Sinharay by 7,484 votes from Tarakeswar (WB)

BY-ELECTION RESULTS

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES

	Winner	Previous position
AP (Tirupati)	YSRC	Retains seat
Karnataka (Belgaum)	BJP	Beats Congress
Kerala (Malappuram)	IUML (UDF)	Retains seat
TN (Kanniyakumari)	Cong	Leading in race

ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES

	Winner	Previous position
Gujarat (Morva Hadaf)	BJP	Previous MLA was disqualified
Jharkhand (Madhupur)	JMM	Retains seat
Karnataka (Basavakalyan)	BJP	Beats Congress
Karnataka (Maski)	Cong	Retains seat
Madhya Pradesh (Damoh)	Cong	Beats BJP
Maharashtra (Pandharpur-Mangalvedha)	BJP	Beats NCP
Mizoram	ZPM	Retains seat
Rajasthan (Rajsamand)	BJP	Retains seat
Rajasthan (Sahada)	Cong	Retains seat
Rajasthan (Sujangarh)	Cong	Retains seat
Telangana (Nagarjuna Sagar)	TRS	Retains seat
Uttarakhand (Ganga Panchooli)	BJP	Retains seat

WITH THIS ISSUE
THE ESSENTIAL CAMPUS DIGEST edex
36 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 OF edex (TABLOID), 4 OF CITY EXPRESS

Brand Pinarayi helps LDF script rare history, retain power in Kerala

B SREEJAN @ Thiruvananthapuram

RIDING on the pro-incumbency wave, the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) won the Assembly elections bagging 99 out of 140 seats. The LDF tally, which matches that of A K Antony-led UDF in 2001, is remarkable as it is rare for an incumbent government to win more seats than the last time.

The LDF win is a personal victory for Vijayan as the CPM and CPI had benched many senior leaders including eight ministers to make room for newcomers. The resounding win in UDF strongholds underlines the theory that votes were cast for the good work of the government rather than the merit of individual candidates.

The UDF, which tried to put up a strong fight with young faces, failed to cash in on the strategy.

A mix of policies with the right combination of development and welfare measures helped the LDF. These include the implementation of Nava Kerala Mission projects, bringing radical changes in health and education sectors and housing for the poor, etc.

The efficient handling of crises such as Nipah, flood and Covid was another big factor. It also helped Pinarayi grow to become a cult figure among Keralites.

The strategic retreat by the front in the Sabarimala women's entry issue also helped.

Pinarayi 2.0 will have to deal with tough challenges from Day One. The biggest worries will be the worsening Covid situation and empty coffers. Pinarayi has sought the support from all including the Opposition to take the state forward. P7

A CPM member takes out a solo celebration in front of AKG Bhavan in Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday | VINCENT PULICKAL

BJP wins Belgaum LS seat, Cong keeps Maski

EXPRESS NEWS SRVICE @ Bengaluru

THE BJP managed to retain the Belgaum Lok Sabha seat and bag the Basavakalyan Assembly constituency while the Congress retained the Maski Assembly seat in the April 17 bypolls, the results of which were declared on Sunday.

Mangala Angadi, wife of former Union Minister Suresh Angadi who succumbed to Covid-19, won the Belgaum parliamentary seat by a narrow margin of 5,240 votes in a see-saw battle as the votes were counted. The BJP had won the previous election by a margin of about 3.9 lakh votes. Although Mangala was leading during the early rounds, Congress' Satish Jarkiholi caught on and was leading by about 10,000 votes during the later rounds, but Mangala finally scraped through, by securing 4,36,868 votes.

CONTINUED ON: P3

Cremating bodies with PPE kits may lead to eco-disaster

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

MASS open cremation of Covid-19 victims, wrapped in Personal Protection kits (PPEs), may possibly lead to a long-term health and environment disaster, according to a senior environment officer.

"Cremation of the bodies of Covid-19 victims, wrapped in PPEs may lead to emission of dioxin and furan gases. They are environmental pollutants and belong to the so-called "dirty dozen" - a group of dangerous chemicals known as persistent organic pollutants (POPs). Dioxin and furan are heavy gases and are carcinogenic in nature. They do not get disintegrated and are present in the atmosphere at breathing level," the officer, who didn't wish to be named, pointed out.

He suggested that PPE kits should either be removed from the bodies before they are cremated, or the bodies wrapped in non-chlorinated kits, to prevent emission of toxic gases. "The PPE kits should ideally be disposed of at a designated place at the grounds for scientific incineration along with the bio-medical waste, but this is an unprecedented situation. Who could have imagined a human tragedy of this scale?" he said.

CONTINUED ON: P5

People perform the last rites of their kin who died of Covid, at Giddenahalli, in Bengaluru | VINOD KUMAR T

FROM ACROSS THE STATE

KR Nagar MLA Sa Ra Mahesh has purchased two ambulances to help transport Covid patients

Kolar MP S Muniswamy visited the defunct BGML Hospital to see if it could be converted into a Covid hospital

Shivamogga City Corporation sets up a Covid war room and helpline to address people's grievances

STATEWIDE	MAY 1	MAY 2
Fresh cases	40,990	37,733
Recoveries	18,343	21,149
Deaths	271	217